College of Behavioral & Health Sciences Research, Innovation, & Discovery Investment (RIDI) Program

Overview: Eligibility, Policies, and Procedures

Purpose

The College of Behavioral & Health Sciences Research, Innovation, and Discovery Investment Program (RIDI) provides seed funding to develop competitive applications aimed at externally funded grants. The RIDI program supports development of original research, scholarship, and creative works at Middle Tennessee State University.

Eligibility

All tenured and tenure-track faculty with appointments in the College of Behavioral & Health Sciences may apply for RIDI funding. Eligible faculty may submit one application in any given review cycle.

Budget Considerations

Project budgets may not exceed **$6,000**. An overall project budget detailing expenses and activities is required. **To remain in compliance with institutional finance policies, investigators should work with the College of Behavioral & Health Sciences Dean's Office for budget development.** Projects will not involve subcontracts or budget transfers between academic units or institutions.

Allowable Expenses

- Summer salary for Principal Investigator*
- Research supplies and animal maintenance
- Equipment costing less than $2,500 (equipment costing over $2,500 requires equal cost-sharing with the Department)
- Research participant stipends
- Technical assistance
- Travel directly related to the conductance and completion of the project
- Publication costs** (publication fees shall not exceed up to 10% of the total grant budget with a total maximum coverage not to exceed $600 from this program)
- Special fees (lab, facility, photography, etc.) directly related to this application

Non-permitted Expenses

- Consultation fees
- Secretarial/administrative personnel
- Tuition
- Travel to scientific or professional meetings
- Honoraria/travel expenses for visiting lecturers
- Salary/stipend support of students, residents/fellows, postdoctoral fellows, mentors, investigators other than the PI
- Construction and building maintenance
- Major alterations
- Purchasing and binding of periodicals and books
- Office and laboratory furniture
- Office equipment and supplies
- Rental of office and laboratory space
- Recruiting and relocation expenses
- Scientific society dues and membership fees

* Summer salary for up to 1/32 (or 0.03125%) of 9-month salary is allowed for the PI. Summer salary may not be used in combination with summer release time from start-up funding or release time from another funding mechanism.

** Publication costs for original research directly resulting from this project, including open access fees, are subject to CBHS Dean's Office review of targeted journal(s). Publication costs are expected to be shared

between this funding mechanism, the PI's academic department, PI's start-up and/or individual research account funds.

Program Restrictions

The project period will be from July to May within the same fiscal year. Funding will begin July 1st and end May 31st. All funds must be expended within the project period they are awarded. No-cost extensions are not permitted.

Submission Procedures

The principal investigator should identify the specific announcement from the external funding agency (e.g., NIH, HRSA, NSF, CDC/P, NIJ, NEA, foundation, etc.) to which an application will be submitted at the completion of the CBHS_RIDI award. Please note that the lay abstract provided in the application form may be used by CBHS to publicize the RIDI program. As such, the abstract should not contain any information that would publicly disclose any intellectual property that may result from the project.

The primary project investigator is responsible for obtaining all applicable approvals concurrent to or prior to proposal submission, including academic, budgetary and research compliance reviews, for the project. IRB/IACUC/IBC approvals are not required prior to application submission; however, approval must occur prior to release of funds.

PIs should submit the entire application as one PDF file to the College of Behavioral & Health Sciences Dean's Office (Lindsey Reynolds: _CBHS.RIDI@mtsu.edu_). Submission will initiate electronic proposal routing that will allow for academic chair and dean and administrative reviews / approvals. The deadline for proposal submission is 11:59PM on March 31, 2025. Notification and Outcomes Letters will be sent to applicants beginning on May 5th, 2025.

Review Process

The principal investigator will be responsible for identifying at least two potential peer reviewers that are not affiliated with MTSU. The RIDI committee, made up of at least 3 representatives from units within CBHS, may select an external reviewer(s) from the PI's list and/or from their own list. The 3 RIDI committee representatives and at least one external reviewer will assess the merit of the proposed work. (NOTE: External reviewers are not affiliated with MTSU and have not collaborated in prior work with the PI. External reviewers must be willing to sign a non-disclosure agreement prior to reviewing the proposal.) External reviewer(s) will provide scientific merit review, assess the potential of the project to attract external funding, and make a recommendation for RIDI funding. External reviews will be included with those from the RIDI committee to make the final funding decisions. Proposals will be reviewed using a weighting system that favors proposal merit, proposals that target external funding (particularly funding with full indirects), engagement of students, tenure track and tenured faculty investigators not having received the funds in prior years.

Resubmission

Resubmissions are allowed by invitation only and specified in the outcome letter containing the funding decision. Resubmissions must include responses to the issues and comments raised by the reviewers in the form of a letter addressed to the College of Behavioral & Health Sciences Dean's Office. The letter must also summarize any substantial additions, deletions, or changes to the application.

Award Conditions & Grant Administration

Project grants will be administered through the College of Behavioral & Health Sciences Dean's Office in collaboration with Middle Tennessee State University's Office of Research and Sponsored Programs to ensure that the research is conducted in compliance with all applicable federal, state, local and institutional regulations.

IP and Tech Transfer

For funds to be released on awarded projects, investigators must notify and work with the Technology Commercialization office to identify and protect any award-related intellectual property. This may include, but is not limited to, obtaining material transfer agreements (MTA's) and collaborative research agreements.

Progress & Final Report

Reporting includes a six-month progress report and a final report to the RIDI committee via Lindsey Reynolds. The six-month progress report should detail the progress of the project. The final report should include a summary of research results; extramural funding applications planned, submitted or funded; manuscripts published, submitted, or in preparation; and presentations at professional meetings. The final report must be submitted no later than 60 days after the latest project expiration date. Awardees may present their work at college-wide faculty meetings.

Applications for External Funding

Awardees are required to submit a research proposal to an external funding agency within 12 months of the completion date of the collaborative project. Awardees are expected to work closely with the College of Behavioral & Health Sciences Dean's Office and Middle Tennessee State University's Office of Research and Sponsored Programs to develop a timeline and gain the assistance needed to prepare the external application. Failure to comply may render the investigators ineligible for future funding through this program.

Duplicate Funding

If duplicate funding is awarded for the approved research during the RIDI project period, all remaining funds in the RIDI grant must be relinquished immediately.

Subsequent Publications & Presentations

Awardees are required to communicate any subsequent publications to the College of Behavioral & Health Sciences Dean's Office within 1 month of the publication. Publications include manuscripts, abstracts, presentations, grants and others.

Acknowledgements

Any published work supported in whole or in part by the RIDI program should acknowledge such support in the resulting publication. Other publicity related to the project should also carry acknowledgement.

A sample acknowledgement is: "*This project was supported in whole or in part by funds from the College of Behavioral & Health Sciences Research, Innovation, and Discovery Investment Program and Middle Tennessee State University.*"

Application Instructions

Completing Your Application

Applications may be completed in black, 11-point Arial, Georgia, Aptos or Palatino Linotype font. Smaller text may be used in figures, graphs, diagrams and charts, as long as it is legible when the page is viewed at 100%. Type density must be no more than 15 characters per linear inch (including characters and spaces). Line spacing must be no more than six lines per vertical inch. Include page numbers in the lower right corner using the same font used to complete your application.

Submit applications as one PDF document. NOTE: Since some PDF converters may reduce font size, it is important to confirm that the final PDF document complies with the font requirements.

Organizing Your Application

Follow the application format outlined below. Incomplete applications or those formatted incorrectly will not be reviewed. **Please contact Lindsey Reynolds in the College of Behavioral & Health Sciences Dean's Office for guidance.**

Title Page (Page 1)

Provide the title of the project, skip three lines and list the principal investigator and project team (one team member per line), skip three lines and provide the title and identifier of the funding opportunity and hyperlink to a complete description and instructions for the funding opportunity announcement. If a hyperlink is not available, please include the complete announcement and instructions after the title page.

Abstract (Page 2)

Prepare a 500-word, structured abstract that includes Introduction, Purpose, Methods, Expected Outcomes and Significance. The abstract may be used by the College of Behavioral & Health Sciences to publicize the RIDI program. As such, the abstract should not contain any information that would publicly disclose any intellectual property that may result from the project.

Project Narrative (Page 3 – X. This section is limited to 4 pages.)

Begin page 3 using the section title, "**Project Narrative**". Use the subheading titles to begin each subsection. Address each of the subsections listed below.

1. **Background & Rationale**
   Describe the context for the project, the current knowledge, the gap in the knowledge base or the unmet need to be addressed.

2. **Objective(s) of this application and relationship to your long-term goal(s)**
   State the purpose of this grant application. Next, describe the long-term goals of your research/innovation/discovery project. Explain how the objective of this application is the logical next step in the systematic progression towards the funding mechanism you are targeting AND your long-term goals.

3. **Specific Aims for this application (include hypotheses if the project is hypothesis-driven research)**
   If your proposal is hypothesis-driven, clearly identify how you will test your hypothesis. If your project is "needs driven", identify what you will do in this application to address the unmet need.

4. **Expected Outcomes**

Clearly identify the expected products, the "payoff", of this research or project. NOTE: There should be one or more expected outcome(s) for each specific aim.

5. **Significance and Innovation**

Justify the need for your proposal. Describe the positive effect the expected outcomes of this application will have on the development of your external funding application, your long-term goals and globally. Innovation addresses a new and substantially different way of addressing something, which results in positive change.

Project Strategy (This section is limited to 6 pages.)

Begin this section on a new page using the section title, "**Project Strategy**". Use the subheading titles to begin each subsection. Address each of the subsections listed below.

1. **Plan of Work (Procedures and Methods)**

The section should provide a logically sequenced, comprehensive description of what you will do and how you will do it. Begin the section with a project overview, or short summary that describes the project/experimental design.

2. **Data Collection and Management**

Detail the process and methods for collecting, managing, storing and securing all data.

3. **Data Analysis**

Provide a detailed description of the data and/or statistical analysis. Explain procedures for variables of interest. This section should easily relate to the project/experimental design.

4. **Timeline for this Application through to External Application Submission**

Develop a chart to illustrate your timetable. After your chart, briefly describe your planned schedule for initiating and completing all activities and each phase of your project. The timetable should include activities in the interim between completing work in this proposal and submitting the proposal for your targeted external funding agency. ***NOTE: Because your timeline involves working closely with the CBHS Dean's Office, the timetable must be reviewed and approved by Lindsey Reynolds (CBHS.RIDI@mtsu.edu) prior to submitting this application.***

5. **Potential Problems & Alternative Strategies**

Anticipate any concerns reviewers might have with the proposal. Describe alternative strategies used to overcome potential problems, should they arise. Consider how the proposed work might be valuable should your hypothesis prove to be invalid (if your work is hypothesis-driven), you do not meet a specific aim or the methodology you propose does not work out.

Supporting Documents

Begin each subsection on a new page using the subheading titles to identify each subsection. Address each of the subsections listed below.

1. **External Funding Information**

Include a link to the funding organization's RFP that this RIDI project is targeting. We should be able to access information about the targeted aims of the request, the program officer or point of contact, the application guidelines, and application deadline.

2. **Student Engagement (limited to 1 page)**
   Describe student involvement in the project. Please be specific about graduate and undergraduate duties, responsibilities and opportunities for completing this application.

3. **Facilities, Equipment and Other Resources (limited to 1 page)**
   Identify all resources available to the project team for completing the specific aims of this application.

4. **Budget & Budget Justification (limited to 1 page)**
   Provide a detailed budget. Explain why the budget request for each budget category in this application is appropriate and reasonable. Please review allowable and non-permitted expenses in the RIDI program overview document. ***NOTE: Because budget management involves working closely with the CBHS Dean's Office, the budget must be reviewed and approved by Lindsey Reynolds (<ins>CBHS.RIDI@mtsu.edu</ins>) prior to submitting this application.***

5. **Biographical Sketch(s)**
   For each PI, please access and complete the non-fellowship biographical sketch form found at: *https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm*

6. **References (limited to 40 references)**
   Use superscripted numbers in order of appearance for citations in text, tables and legends. Include a reference list of all citations used in your proposal. The reference list must be sequenced in the same order as the citations. References in your list may be formatted according to a representative journal in your field. Please identify the journal and provide the information to authors for the journal you select.

7. **School and University Compliance (limited to 1 page)**
   IRB/IACUC/IBC and tech transfer approvals are not required prior to application submission; however, applicable approvals must occur prior to release of funds. Provide accurate statements regarding the status of this application:

   Research Integrity & Compliance: *https://compliance.mtsu.edu/*
   I have / have not submitted an IRB / IACUC proposal for this RIDI project. If an IRB/IACUC proposal has been submitted: When was it submitted? Has it been approved? If not approved, when will it be reviewed?

   Is an IBC plan necessary to conduct this project (see *https://www.mtsu.edu/policies/p405/*)? If so, I have / have not submitted an IBC plan for this RIDI project. If an IBC plan has been submitted: When was it submitted? Has it been approved? If not approved, when will it be reviewed?

   Technology Transfer: *https://www.mtsu.edu/policies/p140/*
   Is a plan to develop and protect intellectual property or engage in technology transfer necessary to conduct this project? If so, I have / have not submitted a plan for development and protection of intellectual property for this RIDI project. If a plan to develop and protect intellectual property or engage in technology transfer has been submitted: When was it submitted? Has it been approved? If not approved, when will it be reviewed?

   NOTE: The College of Behavioral & Health Sciences, in cooperation with Middle Tennessee State University's Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (https://research.mtsu.edu/), may require additional documentation to verify compliance of Federal, State, local and University laws, guidelines and regulations.